Helichrysum bracteatum

CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

November '77

19

Monthly meetings are held on the second Friday of each month except January, in the Castlemaine Education Centre (SEC Building, Mostyn St). Visitors and prospective members are invited to attend the Club's sessions.

President: Mr R. Bradfield, Vaughan.
Treasurer: Mr L. Bransgrove
Secretary: Mrs R. Mills, 108 Blakeleys Rd, Castlemaine.

ORCHIDS OF THE CASTLEMAINE AREA BY R. MILLS

Number 12 of a series

HOODED CALADENIA

Caladenia cucullata Flowering time: Oct.

Flowers are white with a greenish tinge to the tips of the sepals and petals. The backs of the sepals and petals are greenish or reddish with a faint stripe down the centre. The labellum has deep maroon calli and tip, which is curled right under.

The 'hood' bends well down over the style and labellum. There may be one or several flowers.

The 10-20 cm stem is dark reddish and minutely hairy. The leaf is linear and sparsely hairy.

The similar Musky Caladenia (C. angustata) has a pink tip to the labellum, sparse calli and the stem is green and hairy, although it is sometimes tinged with red. The hood is not so strongly curved and it usually has a distinct musky colour.

OCEAN GROVE EXCURSION

by Cameron Singleton

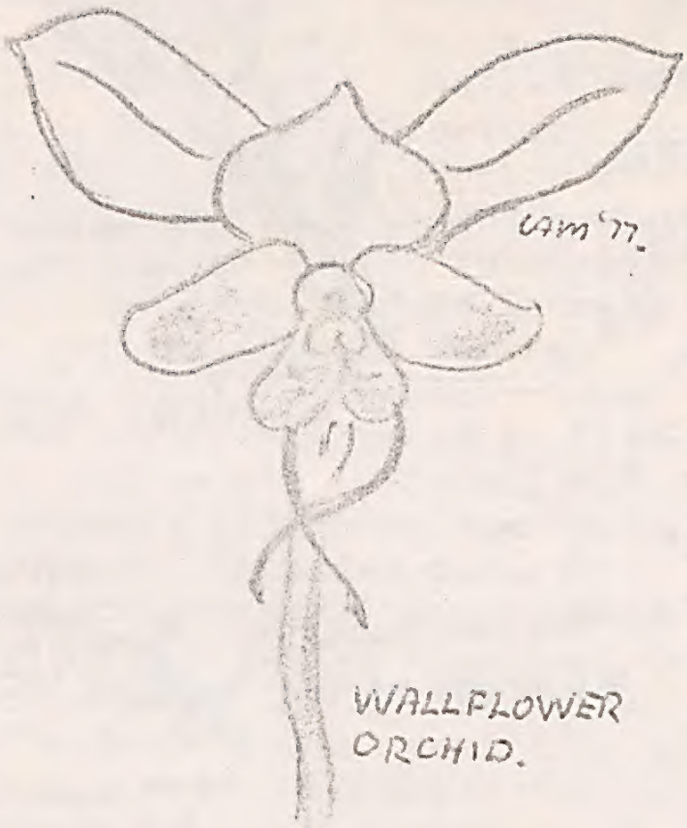
Ocean Grove is about a two hour drive from Castlemaine but a very pleasant one, passing through the Brisbane Ranges. The reserve is located along Grubb Road, which is the first turn-off after the main Ocean Grove junction.

People started to arrive around ten o'clock and by a quarter to eleven most people had arrived.

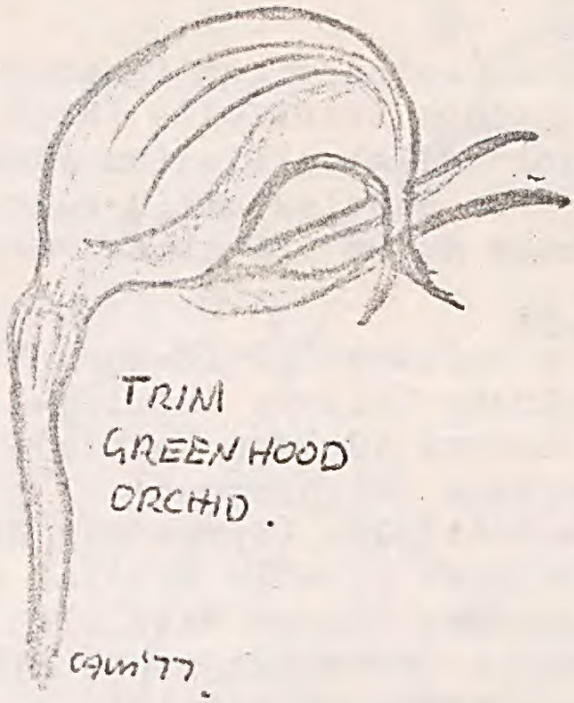
The reserve has an area of 200 acres and was originally intended to be a National Park but the land turned out to be unavailable. Jack Wheeler was our guide for most of the day and after a short talk we all headed off along the Eagle Circuit which is about 1½ miles in length. We passed a dam and came to a clearing surrounded by She-oaks and Wattles, and at the side of this there was a large patch of Wallflower Orchids (Diuris longifolia) These were at least 1½ feet tall and a beautiful yellow and deep purple. Moving on, we constantly passed the red pea flowers of the Running Postman. Soon we came to a patch of Grass Trees with their long flowering spears. They are commonly known as Black Boys. Their creamy white flowers start flowering on the north side making them look as if half their flowers had been plucked off. This patch, and in deeper, boasted of many varieties of orchid, including the Helmet, which were out at the time; Tiger Orchids, Green Hoods, Mosquito Orchids and Sun Orchids to mention a few, for it was not the right season for some of them.

Moving on, Bracken was to be found everywhere and Guinea Flowers were in abundance. The Kangaroo Apples were out showing their large purple flowers that covered the bush, and the native Clematis was out, showing its long silky'beards' which form after the flowers, and are part of the seed. Continuing on, we found many other interesting things, like the eagle's nest which is made of lots of sticks assembled in a high tree.

From there we went to the Koala part which is a small fenced off enclosure. In it were two koalas. The biggest was named George. George had been hit by a car and had two broken shoulders which had paralysed much of his upper torso, including his front feeding legs. Mr Wheeler looked after him and kept him in a kind of swing, so that he could not move for several months until his bones had healed. When he was well enough to feed himself he was put into the Koala enclosure. When we visited him he was very tame and allowed anyone to pat him and take photos.



WALLFLOWER ORCHID.



From there, we kept walking along the track until we reached the picnic area again, where we had lunch.

A few more members arrived and after lunch we set out along a shorter track that led past the scratchings of a bandicoot, a foxes and reptiles' habitat, past a dam and to the antry.

The antry is a special area fenced off that contains logs and stumps that are the homes of dark brown Iridomyrmex intidus ants. These ants are the hosts to the very rare ant blue butterfly. Ocean Grove is the only place in Victoria that they can be found, and these make up about one third of the total known species. The larvae live their entire life in the colonies.

After completing this short walk we returned back to the picnic area where we all wandered about on our own. I got my pencils and paper and headed off in search of orchids. I drew the Wallflower orchids and the Greenhoods that I found. The Greenhoods were in a patch of about 40 with two species of Nodding Greenhood and the trim variety.

After this we left for home after having a very pleasant sunny day that was well worth while.

ELPHINSTONE - THE MONK - Lt BENDIGO

Melbourne Show Holiday (Mon Oct 19) was the occasion for a walk by a group from the Elphinstone Tunnel to the Monk and then to Little Bendigo. An edited plant list is given below.

Ferns

Adiantum aethiopicum (Common Maidenhair)
Cheilanthes tenuifolia (Rock Fern)
Asplenium flabellifolium (Necklace Fern)
Pteridium esculentum (Bracken)
Blechnum nudum (Fishbone Water-fern)

Daviesia ulicifolia

GORSE BITTER-PEA

Wattles

Acacia acinacea (Gold-dust Wattle)*
A dealbata (Silver Wattle)*
A pycnantha (Golden Wattle)*
A. implexa (Lightwoood)
A. genistifolia (Spreading Wattle) *
A. lanigera (Woolly Wattle) *
A. paradoxa (Hedge Wattle)*
A. gunnii (Ploughshare Wattle)*
A. aspera (Rough Wattle)*
A. mearnsii (Black Wattle)
A. baileyana (Cootamundra Wattle)*

TWIN-FLOWER BEARD-HEATH

Leucopogon biflorus

Lilies

Thysanotus patersonii (Twining fringe Lily)
Dichopogon strictus (Chocolate Lily)
Lomandra filiformis (Wattle Mat-rush)
L longifolia (Spiny-headed Mat-rush)
Burchardia umbellata (Milkmaids)
Anguillaria dioica (Early Nancy) *

COMMON BEARD-HEATH

Leucopogon virgatus

Orchids

Caladenia carnea (Pink Fingers) *
C. caerulea (Blue Caladenia)*
Diopdium punctatum (Hyacinth Orchid)
Glossodia major(Waxlip Orchid)
Pterostylis robusta (Tall Greenhood) *
P. nutans (Nodding Greenhood)*

YELLOW STAR

Hypoxis glabella

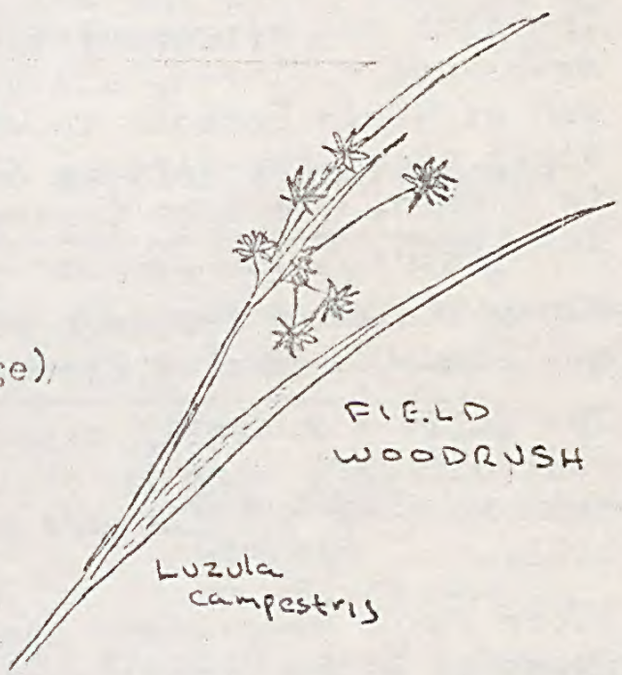
Peas

Gompholobium huegelii (Karella)
Hovea heterophhylla (Common Hovea)*
Platylobium formosum (Handsome Flat-pea)*
Dillwynia sericea (Silky parrot-pea)
Pultenaea largiflorens (Bush-pea)
P. pedunculata (Matted bush-pea)
Daviesia virgata (Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea)
D. ulicifolia (Gorse Bitter-pea)
Ulex europeus (Gorse)
Cytisus monspessulanus (Broom)
Hardenbergia violacea (Sarsaparilla)*

Acaena anserinifolia (Bidgee-widgee)
Acrotriche serrulata (Honey-pots)
Anagallis arvensis (Scarlet Pimpernel)
Astroloma humifusum (Cranberry Heath)
Brachyloma daphnoides (Daphne Heath)
Brunonia australis (Austral pincushion)
Bursaria spinosa (Sweet Bursaria)
Cassytha melantha (Dodder Laurel)
Correa reflexa (Common Correa)*
Danthonia eriantha (Wallaby Grass)
Dianella revoluta (Spreading Flax-lily)
Drosera auriculata (Erienellum)*
D. planchonii (Climbing Sundew)*
D. whittakeri (Scented Sundew)*
Eriostemonverrucosus (Castlemaine Wax)*
Eucalyptus goniocalyx (Longleaf Box)
E. macrorhyncha (Red Stringybark)
E. melliodora (Yellow Box)
E. olyanthemos (Red Box)
E. microcarpa (Grey Box)
E. sideroxylon (Red Ironbark)
Exocarpus cupressiformis (Native Cherry)
Gahnia radula (Thatch Saw-sedge)
Geranium solanderi (Austral Cranes-bill)
Goodenia geniculata (Bent Goodenia)
Grevillea alpina (Mountain Grevillea)
Haloragis tetragyna (Common Raspwort)
Hypoxis glabella (Yellow Star)*
Lepidosperma laterale (Variable Sword-sedge)
Leucopogon ericoides (Pink Beard-heath)*
L. virgatus (Common Beard-heath)*
L. biflorus (Twin-flower Beard-heath)*
Luzula campestris (Field Woodrush)*
Oxalis corniculata (Wood Sorrell)
O. pes-caprae (Sour-sob)
Parahebe perfoliata (Diggers' Speedwell)
Pelargonium rodneyanum (Magenta Stork's-bill)
Persoonia rigida (Stiff Geebung)
Pimelea linifolia (Nodding Rice-flower)
Rhytidospernum procumbens *
Rubus fruticosus (Blackberry)
Stackhousia monogyna (Candles)*
Spyridium parvifolium (Dusty Miller)
Stylidium graminifolium (Grass Trigger-plant)
Tetratheca ciliata (Pink-bells)
Vellia paradoxa (Spur Vellia)
Wahlenbergia stricta (Bluebell)

Drosera Planchonii

Climbing sundew


FIELD WOODRUSH

Luzula campestris

AUSTRAL CRANES BILL

Geranium Solanderi

Daisy family
Cassinia arcuata (Drooping Cassinia)
Craspedia glauca (Billy-buttons)*
Cymbanotus preissianus (Bear's Ear)*
Helichyrysum obcordatum (Grey Everlasting)
Hypochoeris radicata (Flat-weed)
Helipterum australe (Common Sunray)*
Toxanthes muelleri (Common Bow-flower)
Helipterum albicans (Hoary Sunray)

GRAMPIANS CAMPOUT

October 8-9th, 1977. By L. Bransgrove. Leader: Geoff Sitch

The cars assembled near the Falls Gap Football ground late Saturday morning. Some of the party had already conquered Chataqua peak with its spectacular local views whilst others had visited the Wildflower Show. The display was most informative, particularly the painstakingly created orchid landscape. We left the hall with our appetites whetted for what we would see in the next two days.

The club was represented by nine cars containing 30 adults, teenagers and children, all keyed up and ready to go. Our first stop was at Reeds Lookout to view the vast panorama stretching to the south along the Glenelg River Valley between the Serra and Victoria Ranges. We then traversed the Rose Creek Road to the falls for lunch.

Along the road frequent stops were made to view at close hand the multitude of native flowers of all kinds.

The falls - recently discovered - were quite spectacular and the rock climbers were in their element. The whole area is surrounded by a mass of wildflowers and it proved a great spot to boil the billy.

After lunch we proceed along the Forrest Lodge Road to Glenlisa Crossing - the upper reaches of the Glenelg River. On recently burnt land there were some fine specimens of Austral Grass Tree with massive spikes.

Interesting diversions were the sighting of several stumpy tailed lizards and many dead snakes on the roads. A particularly fine specimen was the red-bellied black snake of some 4 feet in length.

We returned to Halls Gap via Asses Ears Road to Zumsteins where a stop was made to see the kangaroos feeding.

The party dispersed for the night to a varied accomodation of motel, caravan and the lowly tent, to reassemble in the morning at Halls Gap.

We took the flat sandy Mt Zero Road through areas of various wildflowers and plants, and after frequent sightseeing pauses reached Gaulton Gorge for lunch. The rock climbers once again enjoyed the track up the gorge to the top. We experienced our first rain at this point but it did not dampen the party's enthusiasm to proceed further on to lat ock. The ascent of the rock face was most interesting with its small rock pools and miniature rock gardens. of Micromyrtus ciliata (Fringed Heath-myrtle) growing in mass. We were rewarded by a fine panoramic view from the top of the Serra Range to the south.

By mid-afternoon the members gradually dispersed to homeward wend their weary way, fortified by the never to be forgotten memories of our Grampians Camp-out 1977.

Each car would have traversed- from home to home - approximately 550 km.
All praise to our leader Geoff Sitch for his patience in answering questions, identifying plants and shrubs. The value of a conducted tour is quite evident as we were taken to some most interesting, but out of the way areas. We only touched a small section of the vast Grampians State Forest of some 210 000 hA, which remains a glorious retreat to wildflower lovers for posterity.

Many thanks to Geoff.

(A list of Grampians wildflowers seen is available on request)

Shortage of space, and correspondents has prevented the publication of reports of two other great excursions - to Mt Beckworth . the Rheola trip

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BRISBANE RANGES CAMPOUT

The WVFNCA October Campout
by B. Singleton.

The two-day campout was held on the first and second of October, at the Brisbane Ranges - known also to some of us as the Anakie Forest. The excursion was organised by the Western Victorian Field Naturalists Clubs' Association and the old Staughtan Vale School was used as the camp site.

Saturday morning was largely taken up with people arriving and settling in, although many did enjoy a two-three mile walk into the ranges directly behind the school, where we were introduced for the first time to the Red Riceflower. There was an abundance orchids with greenhoods, waxlips, rabbits ears, musk and greencomb spiders being predominant. The Xanthorrhoea and Clematis were also n bloom.

After lunch a rather large and very enthusiastic group assembled in the school yard and it was decided to form two convoys, the first exploring the tracks on the upper Anakie Road where permission had been granted to enter private property and view a family of powerful owls. Afternoon tea was generously provided to this group by the owners of the property. The second convoy headed back up the Ballan Road and turned off into the eastern side of the ranges and headed for Nelsons Lookout. Several stops were made along the way and many exciting discoveries made. It was noted that this area was very different from the Castlemaine area, although many varieties of flora were common to both. Of the plants I had not seen in our area were the Horny Cone-bush, Running Postman, Kangaroo Apple, Guinea flower, Love Creeper and the delicate Mosquito Orchid.

Nelsons Lookout, which appeared to be on private property was an open treeless area, heavily grassed with many varieties of wild flower growing quite happily through the grass, two of the interesting types being the Rosemary Grevillea and the Peach Heath. Many remarks were passed on the extraordinary abundance of Greenhood Orchids.

On Sunday a very long convoy set off for the northern end of the Ranges. The weather was not very favorable but didn't manage to dampen the enthusiasm of the group. The main wildflower area is situated on the long narrow spur with a spectacular gorge on the northern side and farmland to the south. The first stop was made to view the Steilitz Grevillea and again masses of Greenhood Orchids. After a brief search several samples of the Blunt Greenhood were found. The next stop was an absolute delight with masses of pink and white Baeckia in full bloom mixed with blue and white Clearea and Borori. A stop was made for lunch at the Little River picnic area and as it was raining quite heavily by this time most of the party viewed the spectacular scene over the gorge and made their way home. We, however, made one more stop at Blackwood Springs where we again found many Greenhoods, Hardenbergia still in bloom and Love Creeper, but failed to find the Maidenhair Fern which the Springs Keeper had informed us was on top of the ridge. This extended our appreciation for the expert guidance and the tolerant answers to requests for identification that we had received over the weekend.

CLUB PROGRAM

November meeting Frid Nov 11
Fim night

December meeting Frid Dec 9
Program by Maryborough FNC

November Excursion Glenluce
Saturday November 10th.
Leave the Education centre at
2.00 p.m.

Newsletter Ed E. Perkins.